Rothbury

ROTHBURY
Urban District Council.

REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer

FOR THE YEAR ENDING

DECEMBER 31st, 1902.

ROTHBURY:
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ROTHBURY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Report of Medical Officer.

For the Year ending December 31st, 1902.

ROTHBURY, JANUARY 19TH, 1903.

TO THE ROTHBURY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

Permit me to lay before you this, my Seventh Annual Report, relating to the year past, viz 1902.

There were only 16 births registered, of which 7 were males, and 9 females. Estimating the population at 1310, this is at a rate of only 12·2 as compared with your previous average of 24·0, and is very low, a condition existing in most agricultural districts. That for England and Wales, is about 28. Doubtless, this is due to the younger robust, and child bearing population drifting into the towns, leaving the older and infirm behind. They were registered as follows, during the first quarter, 8 ; the second, 4 ; third, 3 ; and last, 1.

There were 26 deaths registered, but 7 of them did not belong to the district, and were thus counted as strangers. They met with their death, either from pre-existing illness, or accident. This leaves 19 belonging to the District, and is at the low rate, of only 14·50 as against the previous average of 16·5, and is very favourable. That for Rural England and Wales is about 16·0 and Urban 17·8. Of the 19 residents, 9 were males, and 10 females. They occurred during each month as follows ; January, 1 ; February, 2 ; March, 1 ; April, 4 ; May, 4 ; July, 3 ; August, 3 ; November, 1.

There being 19 deaths, and only 16 births, it follows, that not only was there no natural increase to the population, but it was diminished ; a serious state of affairs if it continued. This is due to the conditions previously mentioned.

There is this gratifying feature, that there was no death under the age of one year, or in infancy. Our average has been 148 per 1000 born, that for England and Wales being 151.

They occurred at the following periods of life, viz, under one year, 0 ; one and under five, 1 ; fifteen and under twenty-five, 2 ; twenty-

five and under sixty, 7; sixty-five and upwards, 9. Thus, as previously mentioned, the aged are much in evidence as shown in the proportion of 9 above to 10 below 65 years of age. Of the 9 former, two were 80 and 84 years respectively, 5 others were over 72 years, the two others being below 70. A somewhat similar condition prevailed the two preceding years.

It is very satisfactory to note, that there were no deaths due to the ordinary Epidemic or Zymotic class of diseases.

Of the other causes of death, there were none due to Phthisis or Tubercular disease, which is very satisfactory. Influenza caused 1 death, Enteritis, 1; Cancer, 1; Heart disease 6, which was largely due to old age, and weakness left after Influenza; attacking those in advanced life. Two of these were over 65 years of age, 3 of the other 4 being 56, 62, and 64 respectively. Senile decay caused 5; Apoplexy 2.

Of the 7 strangers, one committed suicide by hanging during temporary insanity. Another was run over by the train near Scots Gap, and brought here, where he died a few hours later. Two came here in the last stage of Consumption, and died here of the same. A visitor died of heart disease, and a tramp of the same. A young woman died of Pneumonia while on a visit.

Enquiries were held by the Coroner on two of the above.

Under the Notification Act, there were in all, 8 cases notified; viz, 1 of Erysipelas, and 7of Scarlet Fever. The Erysipelas occurred on the face, in a lad. He recovered, and there were no unsanitary conditions present. Of the Scarlet Fever cases, one was below, and 6 above five years of age, and all recovered. The first case was imported here from Blyth on April 17th, in a girl aged 6 years. Strict care, isolation and disinfection were used, and it did not spread. An ash midden here, too full, was emptied after notice; it was used by 4 tenants. A female came here on May 30th on a visit, and developed it the same day, it evidently being in her system before leaving her home at Gosforth. With the usual means taken, it did not spread, and she was taken home. On August 9th an adult male aged 25 took it. Up to that date he had been in the Yeomanry camp. I cannot help thinking, that it was brought here by some boxers from Newcastle, who came there two days previously. Unsanitary conditions existed behind his house and the Queen's Head Hotel, some of which were rectified. He went out sooner than was judicious; and on September 7th a lad aged 7 took it. He might have been near this man, but in this case all care and means were used, a Nurse being also employed, and it did not spread. On December 1st it occurred in a child aged nearly 3 years,

and on the 9th its mother took it. It doubtless had a common origin with one that occurred at Cragside Lakes, outside your district, on the same day. On December 18th another case occurred in the village, probably brought to it from this Lake Cottage. There were no unsanitary conditions.

The Hospital for infections diseases has not been used by any from your district this year.

There has been built a good new iron and wood hospital, in addition to the portion previously existing. It has 2 wards, for male and female patients. Also care-taker's, and Nurse's room, with kitchen and scullery. There are also added, Wash House, Disinfecting Chamber, Ambulance Shed, (with an ambulance carriage in it) also necessary earth closets, and bath rooms.

A case of suspected Small Pox visited the Town from Whitton, and went to the Hospital, nothing further developed.

The removal of ashes has been well attended to of late

The slaughter-houses have been kept tidy and unobjectionable.

The cow sheds were specially visited with your new Inspector, a good many alterations were made on recommendation. Owing to the cow dying, the worst is no longer being used. Mrs Watson's will be rectified (need of air space) in the spring. At Knock Law two byres will also then be provided with drainage by the Duke. Mr. Archer's is not yet connected with the drain. Others still need attention also.

Two old houses (uninhabited) in the Malting Yard, have been re-constructed; proposed out offices in front, were forbidden by your Board. This is a great improvement.

A new cottage with out offices has been built on the Whitton Bank part of village. All new drained.

A new and commodious Workhouse has been built with all necessary sanitary reguirements.

There are in process of erection, 3 houses in Silverton terrace, and 5 on Walby Hill.

Spouting has been provided at Foggon's (butcher), also at Mrs R. Cummings.

The privy ash-middens at Addycomb Cottages were complained of as being offensive. It was decided to call the owner's attention to the desirability of converting these privies into w.c.'s. The broken w.c. behind the Queen's Head, has been replaced. A new one at Daisy Cottage

provided. That at Ramage's has been renewed, and drain opened out.

The ash-middens at head of town, Providence Lane, and Pagon's cottages were emptied out after notice, and kept better since.

Drainage is needed at the Knock Law and R. Pagon's. Ash-midden, manure midden, and spouting at Queen's Head are all needed.

Partly owing to the fact, that 5 houses are now being built beside the river, below the outlet of the sewer, also complaints of residents and visitors, your Board have decided to take the purification of the sewage in hand, and re-lay the main north sewer which is obsolete. The matter has been placed in the hands of a good practical sanitary engineer. This will be a very great benefit and improvement, when carried out.

Your new inspector is regularly and systematically going over the different parts of the district, with very decidedly good results.

The Water supply to the Town, has been good, except on a few specially busy days, when 3 houses at the head of it, were without water great part of 2 days. A deputation of owners and residents, from that part of the outlying district, above the level of the present reservoir, waited upon the Board, asking for a supply. The Water Company were communicated with, who replied that they could not get one of the Tosson springs suitable for joining their present pipes and reservoir. They were willing to sell their present undertaking to the Board, at its cost price.

I am indebted to Mr. Bertram, of Cragside, for the following table of rainfall &c.

MONTHS.		INCHES.
JANUARY	..	1·13
FEBRUARY	..	2·16
MARCH	..	1·52
APRIL	..	1·84
MAY	..	3·60
JUNE	..	2 28
JULY	..	2·58
AUGUST	..	1 53
SEPTEMBER	..	1·45
OCTOBER	..	2·10
NOVEMBER	..	2·38
DECEMBER	..	5·38
	TOTAL	28·05

This is about 6 inches less than our average of 34 inches. There were 184 wet days, and only 1259 hours of bright sunshine, as against 1678 of last year.

Your obedient servant

F. BARROW,

Medical Officer of Health.